IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 3514 of 2002

For Approval and Signature:

Hon'ble MR.JUSTICE R.P.DHOLAKIA

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1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed to see the judgements? : NO

2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO

3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the judgement? : NO

4. Whether this case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder? : NO

5. Whether it is to be circulated to the Civil Judge? : NO

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LALIBEN W/O BALUBHAI BHANABHAI RATHOD

Versus

STATE OF GUJARAT

Appearance:

1. Special Civil Application No. 3514 of 2002

MS SUBHADRA G PATEL for Petitioner No. 1

MR SJ DAVE, AGP for Respondent No. 1-3

CORAM : MR.JUSTICE R.P.DHOLAKIA

Date of decision: 29/04/2002

ORAL JUDGEMENT

The petitioner has been detained under the provisions of Gujarat Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, 1985 (hereinafter referred to as `the Act of 1985') by the order dated 19-12-2001 passed by the Police Commissioner, Surat City and she has been declared as bootlegger.

2. It is now well settled that unless the activities of a person as bootlegger has disturbed the maintenance of public order, she cannot be detained under the Act. Reliance is placed on a decision of the case of Piyush Kantilal Mehta Vs. Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad & Ors. reported in AIR 1989 SC 491.

3. I have heard learned advocate for the petitioner at length and learned AGP, Mr.S.J.Dave, for the respondents. I have also perused the material on record. Learned advocate for the petitioner has stated that two cases under the Prohibition Act were registered against the detenu being Rander Police Station III C.R.No.842 of 2001 dated 5-9-2001 and Prohibition Police Station, West Zone C.R.No.2033 of 2001 dated 31-10-2001. Drawing my attention towards the same, she has submitted that the last offence registered against the detenu was dated 31-10-2001 while the order of detention was passed on 19-12-2001 and hence, there is a delay of more than one and half months in passing the detention order. Learned AGP has fairly admitted the same. In this connection, she has relied upon a judgment delivered by this Court reported in 1997(1) G.L.H. page 381 in the case of Elesh Nandubhai Patel Vs. Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad City and Ors. more particularly at para 21 which reads as under:

> "There appears to be some substance in the contention of the petitioner that these two unregistered cases have been referred only with a view to cover up the gap or to give life to a stale case. This unexplained delay makes a ground of detention not proximate, vitiating the order of detention itself. If I am to buttress my findings, I would say the reference may be made to the decision of the Supreme Court in Anand Prakash V. State of U.P. reported in AIR 1990 SC 516 and Pradeep Nilkanth Vs. S. Ramamurthy reported in 1993(2) Suppl. SCC 61."

It is further submitted that a representation dated 13-3-2002 has been made by the detenu through advocate to the detaining authority and though it has been rejected by the State authority on 5-4-2002, same was communicated vide letter dated 5-4-2002 which was received by the detenu on 12-4-2002 and hence, there is a delay in deciding the representation. She has produced communication dated 5-4-2002 sent by the Home Department, which is ordered to be taken on record.

4. It appears that last offence registered against the petitioner was dated 31-10-2001 and order of detention was passed on 19-12-2001 based on this offence and hence, there is a delay in passing the order. There is also a delay in deciding the representation dated 13-3-2002 of the detenu. No affidavit has been filed either by the detaining authority or the State explaining

satisfactorily the delay caused in passing the order of detention and in deciding the representation. Therefore, in view of the above judgment relied upon by the learned advocate for the petitioner, the order of detention is illegal and the same cannot be sustained. Learned advocate for the petitioner does not press any other grounds.

5. The petition is allowed. The impugned order of detention dated 19-12-2001 passed against the detenu is hereby quashed and set aside. The detenu Laliben, W/o Balubhai Bhanabhai Rathod is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if not required in any other case. Rule is made absolute accordingly with no order as to costs. Direct service is permitted.

(R.P.DHOLAKIA,J.)

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